(ix) A programme for phasing out of lead content in petrol is under implementation. Unleaded petrol with catalytic converter fitted vehicles has been introduced in the four metropolitan cities.

LPG Connections in Punjab

986. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of LPG connections with each agency in various districts of Punjab State and the number of persons on the waiting list, as on 30th October, 1995;

(b) by when the waiting list is likely to be cleared; and

(c) what speedy steps are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) The requisite information is given in the Annexure.

[*See* Appendix 175, Annexure No. 24]

(b) and (c) New LPG connections are released in a phased manner throughout the country including Punjab depending upon the availability of LPG, new customer enrolment plan, waiting list, slack available with the distributors and their viability. Efforts are however constantly on to release LPG connections to as may applicants and as early as possible.

Sanction for posts for Cochin Port Trust

987. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cochin Port Trust has requested to sanction a few posts for handling the container traffic and their maintenance;

(b) if so, what action has been taken thereon;

(c) since when these requests are pending before Central Government and the reasons for the delay; and

(d) whether Government are aware that the port containers traffic is suffering due to the want of sufficient staff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (d) The proposal for creation of posts for operation and maintenance of Container Terminal at Cochin Port was received in 1992. The Projet was completed only on 31.12.94. 113 posts in different categories were sanctioned till November 1993. Now the demand of the port is for creation of additional 148 posts. With 113 posts plus 30 posts which were created at the construction stage, the terminal is operating in two shifts. The proposal for creation of additional posts is under active consideration of the Government.

Scarcity of Technical staff at Cochin Port

988. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the maintenance of equipments including the cranes are suffering due to scarcity of the technical staff at the Cochin Port; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons that the port authorities are not recruiting enough staff to keep the proper maintenance of the imported costly equipments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY): (a) No. Sir. However, certain amount of handicap is possible.

(b) The Port Trust has sent a proposal for recruitment of additional staff, which is under active consideration of the Government.

News-item regarding river waters unfit for drinking

989. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press news-item captioned "13 river waters unfit for drinking" as reported in the Pioneer dated 20th October, 1995;

(b) if so, whether as per-feasibility findings by National River Action Plan, the water of most of the rivers in the country is polluted; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to make the rivers pollution free?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) Yes Sir.

(c) The Government has launched the 'National River Conservation Plan' in July, 1995 as a centrally sponsored scheme on equal cost sharing basis on capital works between the Central and the State Governments at an estimated outlay of Rs. 772 crores to be spread over a period of ten years. Under the plan, the city sewage of the identified towns shall be intercepted, diverted and treated before discharge into the river besides taking up works of low cost sanitation, improved wood based crematoria, river front development and solid waste disposal. Public participation shall be sought through voluntary organisations/Non-Governmental Organisations and by constituting citizens monitoring committees in each town.

Telephone Facilities in Chittor District of Andhra Pradesh

990. SHRI MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have contemplated any programme to expand telecom facilities in Chittor district in Andhra Pradesh during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of new lines proposed to be opened in Chittor district in Andhra Pradesh in 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) the details of expansion of telephone lines are as per Statement (*See* below). The number of new lines being planned to meet the waiting list as on 31.3.1996 are subject to availability of equipment and other resources.

Statement

Tentative plan for Chittor District in Andhra Pradesh for 1996-97

S.No.	Place	Expansion/ Addition of telephone lines
1.	Chittor	2000
2.	Ekambarakuppam	400
3.	Kuppam	576
4.	Mandanapalli	1168
5.	Pakala	520
6.	Piler	424
7.	Punganur	464